

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENNA 07251 111339Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 H-01 INR-10 PM-05
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R 111333Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7544
SECDEF WASHDC
INFO HQUSAF WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 07251

DIA FOR AH4 USCINCEUR FOR ECJ4/7-SA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, MASS, AU, SW, US
SUBJECT: AUSTRIAN PURCHASE OF AIRCRAFT

REF: (A) VIENNA 6775; (B) STOCKHOLM 2989; (C) DSAA/TS/A/
1385/78, 031624Z AUG78 (C)

1. FOR SEVERAL YEARS GOA HAS AT TIMES EXPRESSED INTEREST
IN PROCUREMENT OF NEW FIGHTER/RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT TO
REPLACE OBSOLETE SAAB-105S. MODERNIZATION OF AUSTRIAN
MILITARY CAPABILITY AND EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN APPROVED USG
GOAL AND OBJECTIVE FOR SOME TIME AND, WITHIN LIMITS
ESTABLISHED BY POLICY DIRECTIVES, EMBASSY HAS ENCOURAGED
THIS PROCUREMENT. CONTENDERS HAVE INCLUDED THE SWEDISH
VIGGIN, ISRAELI KFIR AND AMERICAN F-5E WITH THE RESPECTIVE
CHANCES OF EACH RISING AND FALLING AT VARIOUS TIMES OVER
THE PERIOD.

2. RECENTLY GOA INTEREST IN AN AIRCRAFT PURCHASE APPEARS
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TO HAVE INCREASED. REF (A) REPORTED A RECENT STATEMENT
BY CHANCELLOR KREISKY THAT AUSTRIA PROBABLY WOULD DECIDE
THIS FALL TO REPLACE ITS OBSOLETE FIGHTER AIRCRAFT.
VARIOUS SOURCES HAVE TOLD US THAT THE LEADING CONTENDER
AT PRESENT IS THE F-5E, BUT OTHERS REPORT THAT A SPLIT
PURCHASE INVOLVING SOME AMERICAN PLANES AND SOME VIGGINS
STILL IS A POSSIBILITY. ANOTHER REPORT HAS INDICATED

THAT AUSTRIA MAY SEEK TO PURCHASE F-5ES ASSEMBLED/PRODUCED IN SWITZERLAND UNDER US LICENSE WHICH WOULD INCLUDE SOME FORM OF ECONOMIC COMPENSATION. TO DATE WE HAVE RECEIVED NO REQUEST FOR A LOA OR OTHER WRITTEN INDICATION OF OFFICIAL INTEREST FROM THE MOD.

3. AS WE UNDERSTAND PROVISIONS OF THE ARMS EXPORT CONTROL ACT, ALL SALES OF DEFENSE COMMODITIES OVER \$25 MILLION (EXCEPT SALES TO NATO COUNTRIES AND JAPAN, NEW ZEALAND, AND AUSTRALIA) MUST BE ARRANGED UNDER THE DOD FOREIGN MILITARY SALES PROGRAM, NOT DIRECTLY THROUGH THE COMMERCIAL MANUFACTURER. IT IS HIGHLY PROBABLE THAT AN F-5E SALE WOULD COME UNDER THIS PROGRAM, DEPENDING ON QUANTITY PURCHASED. WE UNDERSTAND ALSO THAT SWEDEN WOULD HAVE TO OBTAIN USG APPROVAL BEFORE IT COULD SELL THE VIGGIN TO GOA.

4. FYI. WE HAVE BEEN ASKED BY THE DEFENSE MINISTRY TO ATTEND A SESSION SOON AT WHICH REPRESENTATIVES OF DEFENSE AND TRADE MINISTRIES WANT TO BRIEF US ON CURRENT GOA POLICY REGARDING ECONOMIC COMPENSATION IN DEFENSE PROCUREMENT. END FYI.

5. THE INFORMATION ABOVE IS FOR USG USE ONLY. WE DO NOT SEE HOW IT COULD BE USED TO OUR ADVANTAGE IN CONTACTS WITH THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT OR INDUSTRIALISTS (AS SUGGESTED IN REF B) AT THIS JUNCTURE. WOLF
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